(b) the details of present teledensity of rural and urban areas; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to remove the disparity between the rural and urban connectivity and also to increase the rural telecom penetration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As on 30.09.2004, the Rural Tele-density is 1.66% as against Urban Tele-density of 24.08%.

(c) (i) To minimise the gap between rural and urban areas, a non-lapsable Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has been set up to fund telecom services in the rural and remote areas at affordable and reasonable prices. The scope of support from USOF scheme, apart from other services, covers VPTs in all revenue villages. As on 30.09.2004 523390 villages out of 607491 villages have been connected through Village Public Telephones (VPTs).

(ii) BSNL has also planned at least one WLL Base Transreceiver Station (BTS) in each Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCA) all over the country chiefly to cater to the demand in far-flung rural areas.

Provision of telephone facilities in the villages

83. PROF. M.M.AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in the country which are presently without telephone facility, district-wise; and

(b) the details of the steps, if any, taken by Government to provide telephone facility in these villages along with the time frame?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD NARAYAN RAO): (a) At present, 66,822 villages excluding depopulated villages, villages less than 100 population, villages affected by insurgency, inaccessible villages and villages lying in thick forest are without telephone facility in the country. Telecom circle-wise details of uncovered villages are given at Statement-I (See below). Secondary Switching Area-wise (SSA-wise) details of such villages are given at Statement-ll (See below).

(b) Telephone facility to these uncovered villages is scheduled to be povided over a span of three years *i.e.* by November, 2007 as per tender terms & conditions, finalized by the office of Administrator of the Universal Service Fund.

Statement-I

Telecom circle-wise details of uncovered Villages

Sl. No.	Name of Telecom Circle	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1,074
2.	Assam	8,931
3.	Chhattisgarh	5,043
4.	Gujarat	4,144
5.	Himachal Pradesh	1,002
6.	Jammu & Kashmir	1,755
7.	Jharkhand	1,694
8.	Madhya Pradesh	11,894
9.	Maharashtra	6,441
10.	North-East	3,678
11.	Orissa	4,899
12.	Rajasthan	12,386
13.	Uttranchal	3,881
	Total	66,822

Statement-II

Secondary switching area-wise (SSA-wise) details of uncovered villages

1 . Andhra Pradesh

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Adilabad	97
2.	Anantapur	39
3.	Chittoor	226
4.	Cuddapah	46
5.	East Godhavari	23

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
6.	Karim Nagar	39
7.	Khammam	14
8.	Krishna	30
9.	Kurnool	8
10.	Medak	19
11.	Mehaboob Nagar	29
12.	Nalgonda	38
13.	Nellore	69
14.	Nizamabad	31
15.	Prakasam	85
16.	Ranga Reddy	2
17.	Srikakulam	101
18.	Visakappattinam	50
19.	Vizayanagaram	41
20.	Warangal	82
21.	West Godhavari	5
	TOTAL:	1,074

2. Assam

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Bongaigaon	3,236
2.	Dibrugarh	1,278
3.	Jorhat	1,651
4.	Kamrup	351
5.	Nagaon	923
6.	Silchar	213
7.	Tezpur	1,279
	TOTAL :	8,931

3. Chhattisgarh

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Bastar	1,734
2.	Bilaspur	67
3.	Durg	593
4.	Raipur	563
5.	Rakjarh	236
6.	Surguja	1,850
	TOTAL :	5,043

4. Gujarat

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1,	Ahmedabad	79
2.	Amreli	87
3.	Bhavnagar	106
4.	Bharuch	254
5.	Bhuj	357
6.	Godhra	652
7.	Himatnagar	353
8.	Jamnagar	90
9.	Junagarh	22
10.	Mehsana	206
11.	Nadiad	341
12.	Palanpur	289
13.	Rajkot	54
14.	Sural	223
15.	Surendranagar	64
16.	Vadodara	500
17.	Valsad	467
	TOTAL :	4,144

5. Himachal Pradesh

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Dharamshala	308
2.	Hamirpur	17
3.	Kullu	53
4.	Mandi	141
5.	Shimla	383
6.	Solan	100
	TOTAL :	1002

6. Jammu & Kashmir

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Jammu	141
2.	Leh	145
3.	Rajauri	123
4.	Srinagar	938
5.	Udhampur	408
	TOTAL :	1,755

7. Jharkhand

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Daltonganj	186
2.	Dumka	470
3.	Hazaribagh	643
4.	Jamshedpur	158
5.	Ranchi	237
	TOTAL :	1,694

Madhya Pradesh

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Betul	23
2.	Bhopal	205
3.	Chatarpur	792
4.	Damoh	587
5.	Dewas	223
6.	Dhar	545
7.	Guna	578
8.	Hoshangabad	236
9.	Jabalpur	372
10.	Jhabua	256
11.	Khargone	9
12.	Mandla	1,199
13.	Morena	412
14.	Panna	461
15.	Raisen	326
16.	Rajgarh	504
17.	Ratlam	66
18.	Rewa	1,253
19.	Sagar	552
20.	Shadol	1,055
21.	Shivpuri	116
22.	Sidhi	1,131
23.	Vidisha	343
24.	Satna	650
	TOTAL :	11,894

9. Maharashtra

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Ahmednagar	109
2.	Akoia	176
3.	Amrawati	182
4.	Aurangabad	238
5.	Beed	292
6.	Bhandara	329
7.	Buldhana	130
8.	Chandanpur	22
9.	Dhuto	285
10.	Gadchiroli	48
11.	Goa	18
12.	Jaigoan ,	50
13.	Jalna	83
14.	Kaiyan	731
15.	Kdhapur	47
16.	Nagpur	73
17.	Nanded	314
18.	Naaik	316
19.	Osmanabad	49
20.	Parbhani	208
21.	Pune	674
22.	Raigad	429
23.	Ratnagiri	809
24.	Satara	105
25.	Sindhudurg	309
26.	Solapur	7
27.	Yoetmal	408
	TOTAL :	6,441

10. North East

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	646
2	Manipur	876
3.	Meghaiaya	1,957
4.	Mizoram	96
5.	Nagaland	28
6.	Tripura	75
	TOTAL:	3678

11.Orissa

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Balasore	4
2.	Baripada	86
3	Bhuvaneshwar	293
4.	Bolangir	138
5.	Cuttack	12
6.	Dhankanal	194
7.	Ganjam	638
8.	Kalahandi	200
9.	Koraput	1,681
10.	Phulbani	1,250
11.	Sambalpur	115
12.	Sundaragarh	288
	TOTAL :	4,699

12. Rajasthan

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Ajmer	28
2.	Alwar	534
3,	Banswara	868
4.	Barmer	977
5.	Bharatpur	880
6.	Bhilwara	367
7.	Bikaner	202
8.	Bundi	294
9.	Chittorgarh	1,159
10.	Churu	215
11.	Jaipur	888
12.	Jaisalmer	156
13.	Jhalawar	807
14.	Jhunjhunu	9
15.	Jodhpur	232
16.	Kota	429
17.	Nagour	403
18.	Pali	107
19.	Sawai Madhopur	516
20.	Sikar	172
21.	Sirohi	235
22.	Sriganganagar	1,388
23.	Tonk	326
24.	Udaipur	1,194
	TOTAL :	12,386

13. Uttaranchal

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of uncovered villages
1.	Almora	1,380
2.	Dehradun	113
3.	Nainital	110
4.	New Tehri	502
5.	Srinagar	1,776
	TOTAL :	3,881

Provision of FAX/STD/ISD to Gram Panchayats

84. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated a policy to cover all the Gram Panchayats of the country with public phone facilities including FAX/STD/ISD etc; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when the above facilities would be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The Government has formulated a policy to cover all the revenue villages including all uncovered Gram Panchayats in the country as per Census-2001 with Village Public Telephone facility including STD facility on these VPTs.

FAX/STD/ISD facilities are available in the exchanges and can be provided on demand.

The Government has also a policy to provide FAX/Internet facility in those villages where population exceeds 2000.

(b) At Present, subsidy support is being provided to Village Public Telephones already installed in about 5,20,000 villages. An agreement has been signed in November 2004 by the office of Administrator (Universal Service Fund) with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), to